

**CLAIM AMENDMENTS:**

Please amend the claims as follows:

--1. (currently amended) A hand held wire stripper having a first lever member and a second lever member each with an elongated handle and an offset jaw having a working edge, the first and second lever members being pivotally joined so that the working edges lie essentially adjacent each other when in a closed position, and wherein the working edge of the first lever member includes a first cutting blade section and the working edge of the second lever member includes a second cutting blade section aligned with the first cutting blade section, wherein the first and second cutting blade sections each angle from their working edge in at least two oblique angles with respect to the working edge so that each cutting blade section defines two distinct cutting planes.

2. (original) The wire stripper of claim 1, wherein the first and second cutting blade sections define a first acute angle surface adjacent the working edge and a second acute angle surface of an angle greater than the first surface and spaced from the working edge by the first surface.

3. (previously presented) The wire stripper of claim 2, wherein the first surface ~~is~~ angles from an inside of the working edge about 15 degrees and the second surface ~~is~~ angles from the first surface about 45 degrees.

4. (previously presented) The wire stripper of claim 3, wherein the first surface extends approximately 0.03 inches from the inside of the working edge to the second surface.

5. (original) The wire stripper of claim 1, wherein the lever members are stainless steel.

6. (original) The wire stripper of claim 1, wherein the working edge of the first lever member includes a first set of incrementally sized recesses opening inwardly and the working edge of the second lever member includes a second set of incrementally sized recesses opening inwardly and aligned with the first set so that when the wire stripper is in the closed position the first and second set of recesses form incrementally sized openings for stripping insulation from an insulated conductor.

7. (original) The wire stripper of claim 1, further including a spring biasing apart the handles of the first and second lever members.

8. (original) The wire stripper of claim 1, wherein a tip of each jaw includes an inwardly extending toothed section.

9. (currently amended) A hand held wire stripper having a first lever member and a second lever member each with an elongated handle and an offset jaw having a working edge, the first and second lever members being pivotally joined so that the working edges lie adjacent each other when in a closed position, and wherein the working edge of the first lever member includes a first cutting blade section and the working edge of the second lever member includes a second cutting blade section aligned with the first cutting blade, wherein the first and second cutting blade sections each define a plurality of serrations such that the serrations of the first cutting blade section of the first lever member are aligned with the serrations of the [[other]] second cutting blade section of the second lever member.

10. (original) The wire stripper of claim 9, wherein the first and second cutting blade sections each taper from their working edge in at least two oblique angles with respect to the working edge.

11. (currently amended) A hand held wire stripper has a first lever member pivotally joined to a second lever member about a hinge point, each lever member has an elongate handle and an offset jaw with a working edge positioned such that a working edge of the first lever member is adjacent a working edge of the [[other]] second lever member when in a closed position, each elongated handle has a rear grip and a forward grip separated by an outward extension, the forward grips extend forward from the outward extensions toward the hinge point so as to receive a thumb and forefinger of a user and allow gripping of the handles adjacent the hinge point.

12. (original) The wire stripper of claim 11, wherein the forward grips are concave opening in a direction away from a centerline extending through the hinge point and along the working edges when in the closed position.

13. (original) The wire stripper of claim 12, wherein the forward grips are defined by radii within a range of approximately 1 to 2 inches.

14. (original) The wire stripper of claim 11, wherein the handles are symmetrical about a centerline extending through the hinge point and along the working edges when in the closed position.

15. (original) The wire stripper of claim 14, wherein the rear grips are concave in the direction of the centerline.

16. (original) The wire stripper of claim 15, wherein the forward grips are concave in the direction away from the centerline.

17. (original) The wire stripper of claim 11, wherein the rear grip of the handle of the first lever member is generally concave opening toward a centerline extending through the hinge point and along the working edges when in the closed position and wherein the rear grip of the handle of the second lever member has a first segment adjacent the outward extension that is concave away from the centerline and a second segment adjacent the first segment that is concave toward the centerline.

18. (original) The wire stripper of claim 17, wherein the handle of the first lever member intersects the centerline and the handle of the second lever is disposed on the side of the centerline opposite the handle of the first lever member.

19. (original) The wire stripper of claim 18, wherein the rear grip of the handle of the second lever member has a third segment adjacent the second segment and at an end opposite the hinge point that is concave away from the centerline and defines a finger retaining lip.

20. (original) The wire stripper of claim 17, wherein the forward grips are concave in the direction away from the centerline.

21. (original) The wire stripper of claim 11, wherein each of the rear grips defines at least one raised projection on an outer portion thereof adjacent the outward extensions.--